

Thirteen Dogs from All American Shelter Dog Obedience Program Already Adopted and Many More Waiting for Loving Homes

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Pictured from left to right are volunteer trainers Nick Degan with graduate Antonia and Jill Zavesky with graduate Snooki, Supervisor Mark Lesko, volunteer trainer Tuncay Adem from Canine Counsel, volunteer trainer Karen Zvonik with graduate Jay, Animal Shelter Director Dori Scofield and volunteer trainer Amanda Bonsignoa with graduate Robert.

Farmingville, NY - On June 11, Supervisor Mark Lesko spoke at the First Annual All American Shelter Dog Obedience Graduation Ceremony held at the Brookhaven Town Animal Shelter and Adoption Center. The event was the culmination of the efforts by volunteer trainers Mike Gould from Hounds Town and Tuncay Adem from Canine Counsel, who worked with other volunteers at the shelter to train 20 Animal Shelter Pit Bulls in order to help make them "adoption ready." Prior to the event, 12 Pit Bulls who graduated from the obedience school were adopted and one was adopted at the event. There are still 7 dogs waiting to be adopted who graduated from obedience school, and many more at the animal shelter that deserve loving homes.

Supervisor Lesko said, "Pit Bulls and Pit Mixes make up 95% of the approximately 200 dogs at the Brookhaven Animal Shelter and this program proves how easily they can be trained and how adoptable they are. I thank the dedicated staff and volunteers who made this program possible and hope residents will visit the Animal Shelter to adopt one of these well-behaved companions."

"The Animal Shelter continues make great strides in helping to increase adoption rates and I commend them for this program and for everything they do day after day," said Councilwoman Jane Bonner, "The trainers did such a wonderful job with these dogs, so some very lucky families will be able to adopt an animal that is already trained and ready to be loved."

In addition to the All American Shelter Dog Obedience program, the Brookhaven Animal Shelter has been very progressive in launching other programs that will increase adoption rates and pet retention and find homes for the many Pit Bulls and Pit Mixes in the Animal Shelter. The Brookhaven Bully Alliance (BBA), which was announced earlier this year, encourages other animal rescues to adopt Pit Bulls from the Brookhaven animal shelter and find loving homes for them. Every shelter dog that enters the BBA program is professionally evaluated, spayed or neutered, vaccinated and micro-chipped. \$250 goes to each participating organization for the care of the animal.

Another initiative recently introduced by the Animal shelter is "Spay it Forward," a program that offers incentives to

get animals spayed and neutered. This new program is presently concentrating on the ever-growing Pit Bull population in the Town. For every Pit Bull that a resident gets spayed or neutered, the owner will receive a voucher to help another needy Pit Bull to receive the same services. The goal of this program is to help curb over-population and increase education and awareness about adopting Pit Bulls. The Animal Shelter is also providing free micro-chipping, vaccines, heartworm testing, and collars for anyone who gets their Pit Bull spayed or neutered.

Anyone who would like to adopt one of the graduates of the All American Shelter Dog Obedience training program should call 631-286-4049. The Animal Shelter is located at 300 Horseblock Road in Brookhaven, NY and is open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. For more information on the Brookhaven Animal Shelter, visit www.brookhaven.org/animalshelter.

Division of Public Information * Office of the Supervisor

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